

WHEN GOD FIGHTS YOUR BATTLES FOR YOU

Sometimes I get in the biggest messes. Do you? Do you ever find yourself in something thinking, how in the world did I get in this? Sometimes, unfortunately it is my mouth. Do you ever have your mouth get you in trouble? Oh, we all do. Because in the book of James it says, the tongue is such a tiny thing, but it is like the rudder of a big ship. It makes everything go the way it wants it to go. Sometimes when you say something, the minute it comes out of your mouth you think get back in there. Too late, it is already out there doing its thing. You are thinking, "God, I am so sorry I did that, I am so sorry I said that." That is the favorite prayer of people all over the world, "Get me out of this, God. I will never do it again, I promise." Have you ever prayed one of those? Boy, I have.

Sometimes you get in messes that you really were not doing anything wrong, it is just that everything started going wrong. That happens to me a lot when I am getting ready to produce shows or go on a mission trip. Everything starts going wrong. An example is when I was coming down here to do this show. Let's see what all happened. Well, first of all, I have to do these lessons on my computer and my hard drive crashed. Then I have to send the lessons down by e-mail, and my e-mail and internet crashed. Then I got a cold. Then on the way down, I was trying to go to church in Lubbock. I turned into the parking lot and caught my car somehow, on the edge of the concrete and ripped up my radiator. We had to have a wrecker drag my car off and I had to rent a car to come down here. Now I am supposed to get on these shows and be so peaceful, like I have got everything under control. Well, that was a big mess and it just kept getting worse. Now, I did not really know how to get out of it or how to stop it. Nothing seemed to stop it. That is what the lesson is about today, when God fights your battles for you.

There are lots of times that God says, "I am counting on you. I want you to study my word. I want you to know my word. I want you to know my ways. I want you to stand up and be strong. I want you to operate in the power of the Holy Spirit and do what you know to do." There are other times it is overwhelming, and you do not know what to do. Have you ever felt like that? Lord, it is bigger than I am. I just do not think I can do it. And I do not know how to do it. What in the world am I going to do? Well, you turn to the great problem solver of the universe, the Lord. Look at this first Scripture. This is you. This is me. Psalms 34:6 "This poor man cried and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles." How many of his troubles? All his troubles. The next time you get in trouble or you are in a big mess, I would suggest that you take that verse, Psalms 34:6, write it down on a piece of paper and put it up where you shave or where you put on your make-up every morning. It makes me just realize that I can cry out to the Lord. The Lord will hear me and he will save me out of all my troubles.

It is amazing how God can do it. He can work with complete strangers that never even see each other and actually help someone. What in the world am I talking about? I just had it happen recently. It was just so amazing. I went to church and I heard this wonderful sermon on when you are going through a hard time and God has not moved yet, you cannot figure out how to solve it, and this is what you do while you are waiting. The bottom line of it was just call on the Lord; cry out to the Lord just like this verse. So, I was going to e-mail my friend, Dave, and tell him, "Dave, you need to go online. You need to listen to the sermon online because it is right where you are. It will really help you and encourage you." Now, in the middle of e-mailing him, I decided also I needed to get a new cell phone provider. So I was online checking out what kind of a cell phone would I want, who would be the best provider if I changed, and I thought of checking into T-Mobile. On the T-Mobile site it said type in your zip code, we will give you the name of someone you can e-mail and ask all your questions. So I get this guy's e-mail, his name is Dave or David or something like that. I e-mail him and begin to ask him all my T-Mobile questions about would I have the right coverage, you know all the questions you would ask. So, in the process of doing that, I do not know how it happened, and it had to have been God, somehow the e-mail that I sent to my friend Dave about hey you need to go online and listen to this sermon because the Lord can really help you figure out what to do in your situation. Somehow I sent this e-mail to this complete stranger with T-Mobile named David. He wrote me back this e-mail. He said, "I got your e-mail. I was wondering what made you think that I needed to call on the Lord for help. But for the first time in many, many years that night I got down on my knees after I put my kids to bed and I asked God to help me. How did you know I needed that?" Well, I was looking at that and I was going how did that happen? And I realized God used me. He used me to reach a complete stranger that I will never see, do not even know his last name and never heard from him again. But I wrote him back and I gave him a few suggestions of things that might

help him. I said, "You know you just need to realize, this is how much God loves you. That he could reach out through the internet, through e-mail and hear your cry." That is how much God wants to fight your battles. That is how much God wants you to call on him.

There was a man in the Bible that had a really serious problem. We are going to study him in a minute, but how do you know when you cannot figure out what to do when it is going to be God fighting the battle for you and when it is going to be God expecting you to do what you have learned to do through the years of walking with him? If you have made the mess yourself, you repent. You are just going to have to. I am sorry, but you are going to have to. You are going to have to just say, "Lord, I did it. It is my fault. I did it, but I am sorry. I need you to help me. I have the biggest mess on my hands. Please help me." And then listen. If you hear thoughts inside yourself that you know you could not have thought of what to do, and great peace comes with it, then you know what to do. But, if you do not hear anything, you have to wait until God begins to fight that battle for you and tells you what to do.

(Look at this picture. Here's what I am talking about. This man has his hands up to God. It is like, help!) Do I need to spell H-E-L-P, help. God can give you a battle plan. He can tell you exactly what to do. Sometimes it is so foreign to what you would normally think of doing that you have to say, "Now is this really God? I have got to be sure this is really God. I have to check this out."

So this is the person we are discussing today in the Bible, Jehoshaphat. Have you ever heard the expression "jumping Jehoshaphat"? He was a king. Many of those kings were just unrighteous and mean. They were ungodly. God did not want the children of Israel to have a king; he wanted to be their king. They said, "Oh no, we want to be like everyone around us. Everybody has a king. We want a king." God said, "Okay, you are going to be sorry, but okay. Most of them were really wicked and caused a lot of pain to ordinary people. But they had a few good ones, and Jehoshaphat was one. But even Jehoshaphat had his enemies. You are a good person, and even you, you have enemies, do you not? In 2 Chronicles 20, and you will have to get your Bible and look at the whole story. I can tell you this, it was one of the biggest battles in the whole Bible involving huge, huge numbers of people coming against the Israelites. They were vastly outnumbered, thousands. They were even given the word ahead of time, "A vast army from Edom is marching against you." Here was King Jehoshaphat, terrified. Stark fear, terrified. What did he do? He did what we all have to do in the very beginning, be sure you do this. Do not be one of those stubborn people that say, "Well, I can handle this. If I cannot, then I will ask the Lord." Do not do that, just go to the Lord and say, "Lord, I need your guidance, I want your guidance. Tell me what to do." Jehoshaphat was so terrified. It does not say he asked God for guidance, it said he begged God. Have you ever been there? In the biggest mess and you are just praying, "God you have to help me." Is that wrong to do that? Absolutely not. In fact, in Hebrews it says, "Come boldly to the throne of God making your request known to him." It is not always like, "Dear God, I am in a terrible mess would you please help me." It is like, "God! Help! Help! You have to help me!" And God wants to help you.

What did Jehoshaphat do in this very serious situation? He ordered everyone to begin fasting; you know that is going without food. And everybody fasted. The men, women, children and everybody banded together. In terrible times, that is the time for people to really pull in and pull together. And he prayed. Oh how he prayed. He prayed a real pray. He did not pray one of those little pitty-pat prayers. He prayed a real one. He said, "Here are men from three countries; Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir. They are the territory that you would not allow the Israelites to invade when they came from Egypt. Now they turned away from them and are here to destroy us. Look how they are repaying us, God? They are coming to drive us out of the land that you promised us. You said this is your land, this is your inheritance. Oh God, will you not judge them? Will you not help for we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us?" You have been there. If you have not been there yet, you will be sometime. There will be things that come against you that are so vast; you think there is no way I am going to do this.

In 2 Chronicles 20:12 is talking about Jehoshaphat. He is supposed to be wise, and he is wise. He is a king. He says, "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you." I want to tell you about that. You know, the next time you get in that situation or if you are in it right now, you just stand right there in your house, in your bedroom, in your kitchen, wherever you are. You just stand real still, look up at heaven and say, "God, I do not know what to do, but my eyes are upon you." What does that mean? It means, Lord, I am looking, I am listening, I am trusting, I am believing you are going to tell me what to do. And he will.

So, what happened? Now we are going to talk about how God fought that battle for them. The first thing He did was that He did not send the wisdom to King Jehoshaphat. Sometimes your wisdom comes from a real wise person around you, maybe even a person you do not know that well. But God knows how He wants to do it. This is thing God does to let you know; you are not in charge, I am in charge and I want you to know it. It says here in this passage, "Then the spirit of Lord came on someone. His name was Jahaziel. He was a Levite priest. It takes boldness to speak to a king, it takes boldness to believe you have heard from God this is what we're supposed to do. How did he know to say it? Because of that verse right there that says the spirit of the Lord came on him. You see, when the spirit of the Lord comes on you there is an interaction, and interchanging that goes on and you know something just happened this is not me. This is God coming on the scene. The spirit of the Lord came on him and he said, "Listen, King Jehoshaphat, and all of you who live in Judah and Jerusalem, this is what the Lord says to you, 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of what this vast army has come for the battle is not yours but the Lord's.'" That is the most wonderful thing they could have heard. God was saying these are not your enemies, these are my enemies. They are coming against my plan for your life. That is happening to one of you right now that is listening. How do you know that God is talking to you right this minute? Because when I said, "For the battle is not yours but God" your spirit jumped. The spirit of the Lord came on you and you went, "That's God talking to me." That's wonderful. And then he gave the plan, God's plan. He did not say do it today, He said, "Tomorrow march down against them. They will be climbing up by the Pass of Ziz and you will find them", I mean God gave specific directions, "You will find them at the end of the gorge in the Desert of Jeruel." He is predicting what is going to happen. It had not even happened yet. He says, "You will not have to fight this battle." Oh, what a wonderful thing. "Take up your positions. Stand firm, and see the deliverance of the Lord, the deliverance the Lord will give you. Oh Judah and Jerusalem, do not be afraid, do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow and the Lord will be with you." What a wonderful thing to hear. There were still some more things they had to do and Jehoshaphat was in charge so he did a very important thing; swallowed his pride for one thing. He did not say, "I am in charge, I have to know what to do." The Bible says, "He recognized the Spirit of the Lord talking through the man and he did what he said." The day of the battle, Jehoshaphat had some more orders and they were unusual. After consulting with the people, see he had an idea, he thought it might be God and he consulted with people. That is a wise thing to do. I am thinking about doing this, what do you think? He did not try to do it all by himself. He did not try to be the Lone Ranger. He got other people with wisdom around him. Then he did this idea he had. What an unusual idea. Would you do this? If any of you have ever been in the military, when I tell you what he did, I want you to think about, would your commander have ever told you to do this? I do not think so. I have never heard of it being done. "Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army." They were to be saying, "Give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures forever."

Now, is that not the most amazing thing to do? Here you have a vast army coming against you. You do not know what to do. You hear what God says to do. You consult people, you fast, you pray. And then you praise and you put these people out in front and all they are doing is giving thanks to the Lord for the victory and the battle has not even been fought. Now, you need to learn how to do that. Do you do that when you are going through your mess? When God is fighting your battle for you, you know it because the Lord has spoken to you in your heart. You know He is going to do it. Do you praise God before it ever takes place?

You know, there is a place in prayer when you are spending that kind of time with God over your situation, and all of the sudden you know it is done. It is done in the spirit world. It has not taken place in the physical realm yet, but you know it is done. I have prayed through it. I know God is going to solve it and I am going to watch him do it. That is what had happened to Jehoshaphat. He knew it was going to happen. He said, "Put those guys in front and have them praising God." You see, praise is an extremely important battle tool. Do you know what praise is to the devil? It is like cussing is to you. Do you hate to hear people cuss? I hate it. I do not like to be around it. Well, the devil does not like to be around praise. You see, the devil was involved in that situation. Nobody could see him, but he was inciting this against the children of Israel because he did not want them to get their inheritance. He was doing everything he could to stop it. So praise. Do you feel like praising? Absolutely not. It feels like cornmeal in your mouth, it feels like dry sawdust. I mean, you do not feel it at all. But your spirit man can, and your spirit man can rise up and say, "Get down flesh. I know you do not feel it, but I am going to do it because I believe in the Lord. I believe in his Word and I believe in his promises." Praise is something that opens the door for God to come in. How do I know that? Because it says in Psalms, "God inhabits the praise of His people." Learn as soon as you get in these messes to say, "I praise you Lord. I do not know how you are going to solve it, but I know you are. I know you are for me and not against me. I praise you Lord and you are going to go before me. I do not even have to get there yet, and you are going to be there ahead of me." Oh, it is just such faith.

So here is this big battle. What happened? Did they all get killed? Were they defeated? No, God did things, it was amazing what God did. It says in the Bible that God set ambushes against the enemies and they were defeated. It says they rose up and began to fight among themselves and they all killed each other. When the men of Judah came to the place that overlooks the desert and they looked down on that vast army, they saw only dead bodies lying on the ground. No one had escaped. You know what they did then. Boy, they stopped and had a halleluiah breakdown. It says they stopped and praised the Lord for that victory.

God is full of His stories in the Bible of how He did great things when there was no hope and no way out. Think about Elijah. He said this dry valley is going to be filled with pools of water. There was not rain anywhere. "You'll see neither wind nor rain, says the Lord, but this valley will be filled with water." And it is a simple thing for the Lord to do because He is going to make you victorious over the army. If you want to read about that story it is in 2 Kings 3:14-18. What happened in that situation, every bit as serious? The next day about the time the morning sacrifice was offered, water suddenly appeared. You know God can make water appear, God can make water disappear. God can make seas dry up. There was water everywhere. It was everywhere. Do you know how God defeated their enemies that time? Those Moabites looked at the water and the sun was shining on it. They said it is blood, it is blood. The three armies must all be dead. Let's go attack the Israelites. And what happened? They killed them all. That was God's plan.

What does God say to you today? Maybe you have a battle in your office. Maybe everybody is fighting. Maybe you do not know what to do. Maybe everything is crumbling around you. Maybe God is saying to you, "Do you trust me? Will you let me help you? Will you call on My name?" For those of you that have never ever really trusted the Lord, I want to tell you right now, ask him into your life. Say, "Lord, I do not even know how to do any of this. It does not even make sense to me, but it sounds right and I am pretty desperate. I ask you, Jesus, right now, come into my life. Show me how to believe like this. Do miracles like this for me. Lord, I have big battles in my life. I want you to fight battles for me. I do not know how to do it, but I am ready to get started and I pray right now. I praise you for what you are going to do."

QUIET TIME QUESTIONS

1. What can you learn from the story about King Jehoshaphat?
2. What is the first step when seeking the Lord for your problems?
3. What do you do if you do not hear anything from God initially after confessing your problem to Him?
4. How do you seek the Lord when you need His help?
5. List some of the Scriptures that are helpful to you when you are in trouble.

To watch the video on WHEN GOD FIGHTS YOUR BATTLE FOR YOU, Pillar Two, Intimacy with God go to: www.bettyswann.com

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